passed orders accepting the resolution; and the new scheme, which I should acknowledge is almost entirely the handiwork of non-officials, came into operation from the 1st Vrischikam 1101.

Under the new arrangement the Land Records Department as a separate entity has been abolished and it has been merged in the Revenue Department out of which it was carved. The reform has not been confined to the organisation of the department, for changes have been made in the methods of work as well. To mitigate the hardship entailed by a strict adherence to the original survey records, the accuracy of which has been challenged, the present instructions are that, in land records work and in the disposal of encroachment cases, the Settlement Demarcation Rules should be kept in view and the provisions of the Survey and Boundaries Regulation regarding the issue of notices, etc., strictly complied with.

8. Lands to Backward Classes.—Concessional registries of *puduval* lands to members of the depressed classes are intended to effect in the long run a more equitable distribution of land and the amelioration of the economic condition of those communities. The Land Revenue Department, which registered a total extent of nearly 1,345 acres under these rules from the 1st Chingam 1098 to the 1st Dhanu 1101 and had only a pending file of 243 applications on the latter date, has done useful work for these communities when it is remembered that, although blocks of land to the extent of nearly 16,000 acres have been specially ear-marked for assignment to depressed classes in the various taluks, applications and assignments have not been confined to those lands, and that members of these communities often pray for the assignment of unassignable lands and sometimes show a clear intention of merely speculating in the lands registered in their names.

9. Lands to War Service Men.—There is reason to believe that several officers and men recruited before the Armistice to the combatant ranks of the Indian Army were not, for some reason or other, able to avail themselves of the benefits of the concessions in the matter of land assignment before those concessions were withdrawn in September 1920. Orders have therefore been issued extending the operation of the old rules to these men for a further period of three years and directing Dewan Peishkars to reserve suitable lands as far as possible for the purpose.

10. Disafforestation.—Further progress was made in the disafforestation for paddy cultivation of swampy areas within reserves in the taluks of Kottarakara, Neduvangad and Pattanamtitta, a total extent of 985 acres having been set free for assignment in those three taluks.

11. Land Colonisation.—Under Rule 6 of the Land Colonisation Rules, fourteen committees, with the local Dewan Peishkar or the Commissioner, Devicolam, as President, the Director of Agriculture and Fisheries or his nominee and the local Divisional Forest Officer as official members and with three non-official members each, have been appointed for making out, after inspection, lists of lands fit to be constituted into compact blocks for colonisation purposes. The lists of selected lands will be published in the *Gazette* ; and the committees will recommend, after hearing the Registrar of Co-operative Societies, which of the blocks should be ear-marked for co-operative societies and which for syndicates.

12. Evening Markets.—The levy of fees in evening markets, which are resorted to by the poorer classes of people, having been represented in the Legislative Council to be a harassing and vexatious impost, the Government ordered that no fees whatever should be levied in such markets. The right of collecting dues in respect of the public evening markets having been already farmed out for the current year and the owners of private markets having taken out licenses, some difficulty is experienced in giving full effect to the orders immediately ; but in some cases arrangements have been come to with the licensees and the fees abolished. In any case, evening markets as a whole will be absolutely free from the beginning of the ensuing year.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly